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business man, the historian and the orator, but above all it must be the language of the whole people.

To those of his critics who reproached him with the taunt that he knew Greek better than French, he proudly replied that French was his mother-tongue and came natural to him. His frequent and long-continued sojourns in foreign countries only served to increase his grasp of his own language by enabling him to gain a proper perspective, and it is much to be regretted that the plan of a more pretentious work floating in his mind during many years, which was to be the synthesis of his linguistic researches and a definite plea in favor of the French language, never came to fruition.

Henri Estienne's chief successors in this field were Claude Fauchet and Estienne Pasquier, both of whom were able to improve on his method, but could not even distantly approach him in the matter of originality.

Our author was also a French grammarian of some note, for scattered through his various works are many remarks bearing on this subject. His great merit here is the prominence into which he brought the study of syntax, the essential point of his method being a comparison with Greek and Latin grammar, while it is the spoken language rather than its literary form which is made the basis of his own work on the French side. His etymological theories have by this time become entirely antiquated, but his observations on the meaning and pronunciation of words still have their value. He had also a good deal to say upon the question which has recently been so much agitating the public mind in France; namely, that of orthography. In general he would advocate an adherence to the etymological principle, although fully recognizing the difference between superfluous letters and those actually pronounced.

To sum up, in spite of the imperfections of our author's linguistic methods, his prodigious knowledge, his insatiable curiosity, and the powerful comprehension of his judicial faculty, enabled him to organize the complex facts which he was able to collect, and thus he caught more than one glimpse of the most delicate as well as most fundamental laws of

the French language. His work as a whole presents, therefore, a most precious document, showing the state of the language in his day, the second half of the sixteenth century.

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### HENRIK IBSEN.

*Henrik Ibsen*, in zwei Bänden, von ROMAN WOERNER, Erster Band, 1828-1873. München, 1900, 404 pp.

ONE of the most encouraging symptoms of modern German literary scholarship has been the growing interest in very recent phenomena. It was natural that at first the past was studied with minute care, to the exclusion of a similarly keen interest in works of more recent origin. For a time it looked as if the antiquarian spirit which lurks in every form of historical curiosity, were going to continue. This, we take it, would have been most unfortunate and would have given color to the accusation leveled at historical scholarship in general, as tending to estrange us from our own times. Recent publications like Baechthold's biography of Gottfried Keller, Frey's life of C. F. Meier, and especially R. M. Meyer's treatise on German Literature in the nineteenth century, show that modern scholars by no means disdain to make a scientific study of the literary monuments of our own times. Particularly R. M. Meyer's history should be hailed with satisfaction as the performance of a person who is well acquainted with all the important literature of the past, especially of his own nation, and at the same time full of the warmest sympathy for the literary problems and literary attempts of to-day. Literary science will remain green and vigorous as long as such a spirit of hospitality to all things modern prevails. What is more, literary criticism, when influenced by this combination of large historical knowledge and spontaneous interest in the present, must gain in soundness and fairness, and lose much of the quality of erratic subjectivity which unfortunately often mars it.

Woerner's treatise on Ibsen before us, no less than the books mentioned above, eminently is the expression of a mind well trained in the work of our own generation. The author

is singularly well adapted for his task. A distinguished lecturer on Comparative Literature in Munich, he has for years past turned his main attention to the drama of the world, and particularly to Ibsen (compare his book *Henrik Ibsen's Jugenddramen*, München, 1895). His fine literary sense was shown especially in his translation of the *Nibelungenlied*. In his last book the early works of Ibsen are discussed down to "Emperor and Galilean." There are added an introduction containing a survey of Norwegian literature in this century, based on Dietrichsen and Jaeger, and a chapter on Ibsen's language and his lyrical poems.

The comparative method prevails throughout and proves most valuable in the chapters on "Catiline" and on "The Warriors of Heligoland." Everywhere we are struck with the solid scholarship of the author and his calm attitude towards the works discussed, free from cavil and from blind enthusiasm, and with his keen literary sensitiveness. Woerner's style is admirable,—terse and to the point, yet flexible and elegant. The old contention that the prose of German university-men was labored and opaque, fortunately loses its justice in the presence of such works. Probably no modern nation is laboring harder to improve its prose style and make it a simple and adequate instrument of expression, than are the Germans, and no nation is more rapidly succeeding in creating a new and efficient vehicle of thought. Not only does this apply to political prose and to the style of novelists, but also to the works of certain of the younger representatives of academic life, like, for instance, Heusler and notably Woerner.

This book will prove a very important contribution towards an understanding of Ibsen's position in literature. We hope the author may sometime give us what might be called an introduction to this work: a treatise on realism in the European drama of the nineteenth century before Ibsen; the realism (or what is supposed to be such) in, say, Hebbel's *Maria Magdalena*, Ludwig's *Der Erbförster*, Dumas' *Le Demi Monde*, Sardou's *La Famille Benoiton*, etc.; again, the realism of certain authors since Ibsen's influence has made itself felt: Echegaray (for instance, in *El Hijo De*

*Juan*), Bernard Shaw (for instance, in *Mrs. Warner's Profession*), etc. In this way we shall fully recognize our indebtedness to the great Norwegian, and also better understand how large a margin of improvement is still left.

Only one word of protest. In the introduction Woerner compares Norway with North America, and continues:

"But on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, for the present the desire for material acquisition reigns supreme in the inner life of the masses; even a prolonged sojourn in America reveals no intellectual undercurrents, no longing for the ideal."

To prove the incorrectness of such statements we need only remind the author of names like Longfellow, Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe, Lowell, etc., and in more recent years, of Howells, James, Field, and especially Henry B. Fuller, etc. We might also call the author's attention to what he probably does not know, that no modern country has made greater strides in pedagogy than America, that American landscape and portrait painters are making a distinct mark in the world, that one of the very greatest of modern painters, Whistler, is an American, that the rapidity with which love for good music has spread over here is something remarkable. If Woerner knew enough of American civilization to judge, he probably would express himself very differently. His ideas need not irritate us except inasmuch as views like these (based, as they are in his own case, on slender acquaintance with the country made under unfavorable circumstances) have spread abroad and continue to feed what seems to be an ineradicable prejudice against this country. As a natural result, in certain parts of the United States there arises complete indifference and even hostility towards all European views of American affairs.

We look forward to an English translation of Woerner's works and feel sure that it would supplement in very important fashion the efforts to introduce Ibsen to English-speaking nations, made on the part of men like Archer, Boyesen, Gosse, etc., etc.

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